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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 PORT AU PRINCE 001093

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STATE FOR WHA/EX AND WHA/CAR
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E.O. 12958: DECL: 08/01/2018
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [KDEM](#) [HA](#)
SUBJECT: MICHELE PIERRE-LOUIS HAITI'S NEW PRIME MINISTER.
NEXT STEP: FORM A GOVERNMENT

REF: A. PORT AU PRINCE 1086
[1](#)B. PORT AU PRINCE 1054

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Classified By: Charge d'Affaires Thomas C. Tighe for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

[1](#)1. (SBU) Summary: The Haitian Senate on July 31 voted 12 to 0, with 5 abstentions, to ratify Michele Pierre-Louis as Prime Minister. Successfully confirmed by both chambers of Parliament, Pierre-Louis is now Prime Minister of Haiti. Pierre-Louis and President Preval will now move forward with the process of selecting a Cabinet of Ministers and outlining a general policy, which must then be approved by both chambers of Parliament. As they did during her confirmation process, Preval and Pierre-Louis face delicate negotiations with parliamentarians and political parties over the composition of the cabinet and the major objectives of her policies. The parties have drawn up a protocol outlining their preferred method of cabinet selection and the major issues they would like to see addressed in the government's general policy. Senators and deputies have likewise expressed their interest in taking part in the process. The negotiations will take time, but the ratification of Pierre-Louis represents a major step toward moving Haiti forward from the political stagnation of the last four months. End summary.

[1](#)2. (SBU) In a brief session the afternoon of July 31, the Senate voted 12 to 0 in favor of Michele Pierre-Louis' candidacy for Prime Minister. Five senators abstained. All 18 senators were present for the session. (Note: The Senate President does not vote. End note.) The five senators that abstained on July 31 were Edmonde Supplice Beauzile (Fusion, Center), Fritz Carlos Lebon (Union, South), Evalliere Beauplan (Pont, Northwest), Judnel Jean (Fusion, Northeast) and Jean Hector Anacasis (Lespwa, West). With the exception of Senator Anacasis, the abstaining senators have all expressed reservations about Pierre-Louis' moral integrity due to her alleged homosexuality. Senator Anacasis said after the vote that he was more interested in the PM's general policy than her candidacy. Speculation surrounding his vote is that he is holding off taking a public stance in order to maintain leverage over Pierre-Louis' cabinet and policies. (Note: Anacasis told the Ambassador July 7 that Pierre-Louis had support from Lespwa and would be confirmed

by August. End note.)

13. (U) According to article 158 of the 1987 Haitian Constitution, the next step is for the Prime Minister, with the approval of the President, to select cabinet members. The Prime Minister and cabinet then present to Parliament for a vote of confidence a 'declaration of general policy.' According to the Constitution, 'In the event of a vote of no-confidence by one of the two Houses, the procedure shall be repeated.' The preceding sentence has caused a simmering legal debate over at which point the repetition of the process begins: with the selection of a cabinet and outline of a general policy, or with the President's nomination of a Prime Minister.

14. (C) The Senate President convoked a session July 30 but was unable to open the session due to lack of quorum (ref A). Fusion, whose senators had stayed away from the July 30 session in response to party instructions (ref A), gave permission July 31 for its members to attend the session and vote in favor of Pierre-Louis. Fusion spokesperson Micha Gaillard told Poloff July 31 that President Preval had addressed Fusion's concerns during a July 31 meeting with the major political parties represented in parliament. According to Gaillard, during the meeting Preval and Pierre-Louis agreed to integrate political party representatives into the next government. The President and the parties agreed to address at a later date the exact method. The parties also presented again their 'governability pact' (ref B), a proposed protocol between the parties, the PM and the President. Preval agreed to study the pact and draw from it elaborating a method for including parties in the government and in setting out major policy directions. (Note: The pact calls for 'equitable participation in the government' of

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political parties in proportion to their representation in Parliament. It also outlines major policy directions, including reinforcement of the state through organization of elections, decentralization, reform of the agriculture industry and facilitation of investment. End note.)

15. (U) Immediately following the vote, Senator Lambert (Lespwa, Southeast) urged a cautious celebration, noting that Pierre-Louis received just 12 votes and will need the support of four additional senators to pass her general policies through the Senate. He said he would like to see Pierre-Louis put together a government where political parties other than the President's are included, not to share the profits of government but to share the responsibility of governing.

16. (C) In the Chamber of Deputies, the focus again turns to the ad-hoc majority bloc dubbed the Cooperative of Progressive Parliamentarians (CPP). CPP deputy Gazner Douze (Fusion, Cornillon/West) told Poloff July 30 that the deputies will expect in-depth discussions with the Executive over the general government policy. He said the CPP's concern is for the contents of the government program, not the individuals who will fill ministerial posts. Regarding the integration of political party representatives in the cabinet, Douze said the CPP had been clear with Preval that the Alexis-style cabinet was disjointed and did not obtain results. For Pierre-Louis' cabinet, the CPP simply wishes that ministers work together to implement government programs and do not use their positions to lobby for their own political parties. (Note: CPP deputy Jean Pressoir Dort (Artibonite in Action, Marchand Dessalines/Artibonite) told Poloff July 25 that the CPP opposes a government bloated with political parties. Deputy Douze, on the other hand, called political parties 'instruments in the service of democracy,' and stated that the CPP never/never said they opposed political parties. End note.)

17. (C) Comment: Michele Pierre-Louis' ratification is a major step toward ending the political impasse that began

with PM Alexis' ouster in April. The process of selecting a cabinet and outlining a general policy will be contentious -- senators, deputies, political parties all want to be party to these decisions. The length of debate is unpredictable, but it will likely take several weeks or longer. One issue clearly illustrated during the ratification process was that the President lacks a majority in Parliament. The new government will need to cobble together a majority in both chambers in order to pass its general policies and prevent Parliament from hampering future government activities.

TIGHE